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SOURCE Stockholms-Tidningen.REPORTED TENSION, DESERTIONS IN SOVIET ARMYSOVIET TROOPS CELEBRATE DEATH OF STALIN -- Stockholm, Stockholms-Tidningen,  
13 May 1953

Alexander Trushnovich, director of the Russian Refugee Bureau in West Berlin, reports that in many instances the Soviet occupation garrisons in East Germany celebrated wildly on the night after Stalin's death. At one barracks the troops drank and sang the whole night. They threw their empty bottles out in the street and in the morning there was so much broken glass in the street that it was impassable for cars and bicycles. At another garrison the German civilian population did not dare go to bed because of the noise and singing which was coming from the barracks. At still another garrison the troops, both officers and enlisted men, were ordered to remain in quarters on the night after Stalin's death. However, this did not keep them from going out on the street where there were lively discussions about the event. They were all arrested the next morning but were soon released. At this same garrison an honor guard consisting of two sergeants was posted by a picture of Stalin. All those who passed by showed their lack of respect with curses and coarse jokes.

According to Trushnovich, who is of Slovenian birth and who first came during World War I to Russia, where he fought on the side of the White Russians against the Bolsheviks, the reaction of the Soviet occupation troops came as a surprise even to the Russian Refugee Bureau. Moreover, people have become aware of a great change which has come over the Soviet Army during the last several years. Soldiers and officers -- each group within itself -- are no longer afraid to talk with each other, to confide in each other, and to form groups and cliques. Three years ago it was entirely inconceivable that a group of soldiers should be able to walk and converse on the streets. Naturally, they are afraid of the political police, but it is not the same paralyzing fear as before.

The explanation for the reaction of the Soviet occupation troops to the death of Stalin might be, according to Trushnovich, that with Stalin gone the soldiers expect their lot to be better. They realized that against Stalin they

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could do nothing. However, Malenkov and Beriya have no authority in the army; they did not know Lenin and did not participate in the war. Generally speaking, they are unknown among the troops.

The Soviet occupation troops are under great psychological strain, states Trushnovich. On their arrival, they are exposed to a barrage of propaganda about the miserable, fascistic surroundings they will serve in, and are forbidden to have any contact with their environment. But contact cannot be avoided, and after 6 months the troops realize that all the propaganda was false. The reactions to this realization are manifold and sharp. Suicide is not uncommon and alcoholism is still more common. Even cases of insanity have been reported.

SOVIET DESERTERS REPORT STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN USSR -- Stockholm, Stockholms-Tidningen, 13 May 53

Berlin, 12 May 1953 (TT-Reuter) -- According to a statement by five Soviet officers who have fled to West Germany, some of whom served as recently as one year ago in the Red Army, a mighty struggle for power is going on at present among the highest Communist leaders in the USSR. The five officers state that the new government in Moscow is weak and is forced to make concessions. The new situation has released all the anti-Communist forces which have grown up in the USSR over 30 years. The five believe that the Western Powers ought to encourage this resistance and regard the new Soviet peace campaign as foreign-policy propaganda to gain time on the domestic front. The five officers claim that at least 30 officers a month desert from the occupation troops in East Germany. Soviet Army officers can -- as enlisted men cannot -- easily listen to foreign radio broadcasts in their rooms.

HIGH OFFICER IN EAST GERMAN MARITIME POLICE SEEKS ASYLUM -- Stockholm, Stockholms-Tidningen, 13 May 53

Berlin, 12 May 1953 (TT-Reuter) -- Refugee authorities announced today that Col Siegfried Gerber of the East German Maritime Police fled to West Berlin and requested political asylum the day before he was to be promoted to the rank of Major General. Colonel Gerber was chief of the Coast Guard in Kuehlungsborn; with him fled two doctors from the hospital in Kuehlungsborn. Gerber was a member of the Communist Party for 18 years. He explained that he has now changed his views on Communism. He is a close friend of the head of the Maritime Police, Admiral Werner.

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